



RIZPAH

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Who is Rizpah?

Bible account

Lessons taken from Rizpah

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Rizpah is one of the concubines of King Saul. She is the daughter of Aiah. (2 Samuel 3:7). She had two sons, namely Armoni and Mephibosheth through King Saul. (2 Samuel 21: 8).

Note: Aiah is in Genesis 36:24; 1 Chronicles 1:34-40. He belongs to Esau's family.

Bible account:

2 Samuel 21: 1 - 14 NKJV - Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year; and David inquired of the Lord. And the Lord answered, "It is because of Saul and his bloodthirsty house, because he killed the Gibeonites." ²So the king called the Gibeonites and spoke to them. Now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; the children of Israel had sworn protection to them, but Saul had sought to kill them in his zeal for the children of Israel and Judah. ³Therefore David said to the Gibeonites, "What shall I do for you? And with what shall I make atonement, that you may bless the inheritance of the Lord?"

⁴And the Gibeonites said to him, "We will have no silver or gold from Saul or from his house, nor shall you kill any man in Israel for us." So he said, "Whatever you say, I will do for you." ⁵Then they answered the king, "As for the man who consumed us and plotted against us, that we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the territories of Israel, ⁶let seven men of his descendants be delivered to us, and we will hang them before the Lord in Gibeah of Saul, whom the Lord chose." And the king said, "I will give them."

⁷But the king spared Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, because of the Lord's oath that was between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul. ⁸So the king took Armoni and Mephibosheth, the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom she bore to Saul, and the five sons of Michal the daughter of Saul, whom she brought up for Adriel the son of Barzillai the Meholathite; ⁹and he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them on the hill before the Lord. So they fell, all seven together, and were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first days, in the beginning of barley harvest.

¹⁰Now Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth and spread it for herself on the rock, from the beginning of harvest until the late rains poured on them from

heaven. And she did not allow the birds of the air to rest on them by day nor the beasts of the field by night. ¹¹ And David was told what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done. ¹² Then David went and took the bones of Saul, and the bones of Jonathan his son, from the men of Jabesh Gilead who had stolen them from the street of Beth Shan, where the Philistines had hung them up, after the Philistines had struck down Saul in Gilboa. ¹³ So he brought up the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from there; and they gathered the bones of those who had been hanged. ¹⁴ They buried the bones of Saul and Jonathan his son in the country of Benjamin in Zelah, in the tomb of Kish his father. So they performed all that the king commanded. And after that God heeded the prayer for the land.

Lessons taken from Rizpah:

- **Understanding**: Rizpah gave her both sons as a ransom for what King Saul did in the past.
- **Calm**: Rizpah remained calm and composed when her sons were taken as ransom.
- **Patient**: She spread sackcloth on the rock from the beginning of barley harvest until the late rains (nearly 4-6 months) in order not to allow the birds in the days or the beasts at night to rest on the carcasses. She remained there until King David buried the bones of Saul, Jonathan and those of them who were hanged. (2 Samuel 21: 10, 12-14)
- **Humble**: She brought herself from a queen like status to a low level by laying a sack on a rock to look after her sons' dead bodies.
- **Responsible**: As a mom, she wanted to get her sons' and husband's last ritual or burial to take place properly.

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